

Risk Stratification for Patients

Personal confidential data

Personal confidential data (PCD) is the information we hold about you on your health record. This includes information such as your name & address, NHS number, date of birth, ethnicity, gender, current or previous health conditions and treatment. We get most of this PCD directly from you, when you register with us or during visits to your GP.

Sometimes we get additional PCD from other health care professionals, or need to share some of your PCD with them; for example, if you spend time in hospital or we refer you for tests or treatment.

Using your PCD

Taking care of your PCD is very important to us; we comply with the NHS Code of Confidentiality and the Data Protection Act 1998. We restrict access to your complete health record to those with a genuine 'need to know' because they are involved in your health care.

The main (primary) reason we use or share your PCD is to provide you with appropriate health care. Occasionally we may need to use or share some of your PCD for other (secondary) reasons, like research into a particular condition, or to help plan and budget for local health services for the future.

If we use information for secondary reasons we remove as much of your PCD that could identify you personally as possible and only use the information we really need. For example, we might use your postcode, but not your name & address, and change your date of birth to a broad age range - this is often known as 'de-identified' information.

Risk Stratification

Risk Stratification (RS) is an important secondary use that helps us identify patients that have (or might develop) long-term health conditions or are at higher risk of emergency or regular admission to hospital.

RS uses de-identified information such as the number of times you have visited your GP, the reasons for those visits, and any unplanned hospital visits, to predict the likelihood that you might benefit from extra support to stay healthy. RS also uses your NHS Number to match up your risk score to your health records, but not PCD that identifies you to other people.

Only your GP can see your personal risk score and decide whether to contact you with an offer of extra support. You can choose to accept or refuse any offer of support.

We hope you agree that RS is important to help keep people healthy, and for reducing hospital and other health costs. We would like to use some of your de-identified information for this purpose, but appreciate that you may have concerns and questions.

If you decide that you do not want your de-identified information used we will respect your wishes and make a note on your health record.

If you would like to know more about RS in particular, or about your health record in general, please contact your GP Practice.